Shortage of cooking gas

180. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK:
SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what measures Government has taken or is contemplating to take to meet the shortage of cooking gas in the country; and

(b) the reasons for shortage of LPG?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

OMCs have supplied 7885.1 Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT) of domestic LPG in the country during the period April, 2008 to December, 2008 as against 7521.2 TMT of domestic LPG during the corresponding period of last year, showing a growth rate of 4.83%.

As on 11.02.2009, OMCs have reported a backlog of few days in LPG supplies in certain States in the country due to a combination of factors *viz.*, spurt in demand, strike by oil sector officers association, strikes/bandhs/hartal by various parties in some States etc. Government has advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the States by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours. All the LPG distributors have also been advised to effect the deliveries on Sundays and holidays also. The backlog is expected to be cleared by the end of February, 2009.

Malpractices by gas agencies

181. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that diversion of domestic cooking gas cylinders for commercial uses continues unabated in the country;

(b) the number of such cases detected by the public sector petroleum companies during 2008, company-wise; and

(c) the action taken against the gas agencies and their employees involved and further action taken to end this and other malpractices being indulged into by the gas agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The possibility of blackmarketing/ diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have detected 521 cases of diversion/ blackmarketing of LPG by their LPG distributorships in the country during the period